



A National Lutheran Community



Reflections

ON 40 YEARS IN ROCKVILLE
VOICES OF LIVES WHO HAVE BEEN TOUCHED



Lawrence R. Bradshaw

President & CEO, National Lutheran Communities & Services

I was told from the very beginning of my tenure as President & CEO that the National Lutheran Home was the “best kept secret” in Montgomery County. My initial impression was that it truly was home for so many of the individuals residing here, many who had lived here almost 20 years.

To carry on the legacy of the National Lutheran Home, while at the same time preparing the organization for the changes that were coming to senior living, seemed at times daunting. Very early on, it became clear that to “honor the past while preparing for the future” was going to be a challenging and a long-term endeavor. In fact, a part of our mission statement now, to “honor, inspire and support,” was born out of our commitment to always honor the past.

When the National Lutheran Home came to Rockville in 1980, it was a significant culture shift from our original location in Northeast Washington, D.C. The move from a highly clinical model to a more balanced clinical and resident model was indeed a tremendous task. Except for the residential cottages, the community stayed the same for much of the next 30 years, but change was indeed coming and necessary.

In 2011, the first major renovation in almost 30 years was undertaken. This renovation would reduce the number of skilled nursing rooms to 160 from 300 and add 50 new assisted living apartments. Every space in the main building would be renovated except for the back hallway, which housed much of the mechanical and laundry areas. The National Lutheran Home, would be renamed as The Village at Rockville—A National Lutheran Community, a change in name but not in heritage or expectations for our residents.

Now in 2020, the Glenmere independent living expansion will start a new chapter at The Village at Rockville. In January 2021, The Village at Rockville will welcome a new generation of older adults with different ideas and expectations. Our team will certainly be up to the challenge. The building and services may change, but more than ever we will need to continue to “honor our heritage, while continuing to plan for the future.”



The National Lutheran Home was first incorporated in Washington, D.C. in 1890, and then built on property given by Mrs. Sarah Utermehle. At the D.C. location, team members and volunteers faithfully served and partnered with thousands of older adults until 1980, when it moved to Rockville, Maryland. We celebrate these 40 years!

In 2009, the mission broadened to create and encompass other senior communities. National Lutheran Communities & Services (*NLCS*) became the parent organization. In Rockville, we became The Village at Rockville—*A National Lutheran Community*. We have continued to adapt to changing needs and times, but always serving faithfully to our mission statement:

**NLCS HONORS, INSPIRES AND SUPPORTS
CHOICE AND OPPORTUNITY IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH OLDER ADULTS.**

The reflections in this booklet are from former and current chaplains and other team members, volunteers, families of residents, residents, and donors. These are all people whose lives have been touched by others here. They are, however, only the tip of the iceberg of the vast depths of love and kindness shown here at The Village at Rockville.

Thank you for whatever your part may be at this special place.



Melba Reichard

It's hard to believe that when the National Lutheran Home moved to Rockville in 1980 I had already been on staff for 20 years – and then stayed 25 more until 2005.

I had attended the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse in Baltimore and wanted to work in an agency of the Church. A friend was leaving her position at the National Lutheran Home and suggested that I contact Dr. Robert Lang, the Pastor-Superintendent, who then hired me.

Technology improved once we moved to Rockville and moved into the computer age. Earlier, when Lutheran congregations sent Harvest Home gifts of fresh and home-canned vegetables, and commercially-canned foods, I remember typing many, many thank you letters on the manual typewriter, each one an original. I recall we had only one telephone in the front office in D.C. When the phone rang, one of the two of us would get up from our desk to answer the call.

When I arrived in 1960, few residents (*then called "guests"*) received any retirement pensions or even Social Security. The National Lutheran Home relied on contributions from donors and churches to fulfill its commitment under a complete-care Trustee Plan. It wasn't until the late 1960s that residents began to arrive with retirement benefits. In 1968, residents became eligible to receive Medicare and Medicaid.

I have wonderful memories of the residents whom I had met over the years. It is one of the joys of my life. I will be ever grateful for the opportunity to have served the National Lutheran Home.

WHAT HAS MOTIVATED YOUR GIVING?

We have tried to support the National Lutheran Home since before it moved to Rockville. This involved sponsored game nights and attendance at benefit dinners as well as financial gifts. We feel that this type of care is a need for most of us eventually. The alternative is dying young. ~ Richard and Joan Ahrens



The Rev. Dr. Richard D. Reichard

The highlight of my career at the National Lutheran Home, where I worked from 1967 – 2005 (*before the name change*), was the planning and construction of a state-of-the-art building on a new campus in Rockville, Maryland. That campus included cottages for independent living along with nursing care at all levels.

My experience with the National Lutheran Home began as a parish pastor in Pennsylvania in 1963.

My members, many of them farmers, sent their Harvest Home foodstuffs to the original location in Washington, DC, each year. In 1967, The Rev. Dr. Robert L. Lang, Pastor-Superintendent, asked if I would consider joining the team. I became the Chaplain, combining pastoral and administrative roles, in April that year.

I began a master's degree study in long-term care administration at The George Washington University. I was elected Executive Director (*a newly-created title*) in 1975.

My motivation for serving at the National Lutheran Home was in its on-going commitment to genuine, caring service to the larger church, its 300 residents, and the team who so lovingly served them! The community had remained true to its historical mission: "To serve older adults whose circumstances so require a comfortable residence, with room, board, medical care, and such other comforts as Christian concern may dictate." At one time it subsidized the care of over 60% of its residents through support from churches, synods, generous donors, and eventually, governmental revenues under Medicare and Medicaid.

Along with my wife, Melba, whom I married in 1976, we served a combined 82 years together at the National Lutheran Home. It was a joyous experience, for which we say: thanks be to God!





Chaplain Richard Hembrock

I had been a military chaplain in many places, including Viet Nam. Through the Army Reserves, I knew Pr. Richard Reichard, who had been the Chaplain and was promoted to be the Executive Director at the National Lutheran Home in Washington, D.C. He asked me if I would be interested in applying for his job. I began as Chaplain in 1976 and served until 1984. This work with older adults was different than with young soldiers, but my hospital training at Walter Reed helped with meeting spiritual needs, no matter the age.

Most, but not all, of the residents were Lutheran, with a majority from the Baltimore area and every church was represented. My military background was handy. I had worked with people from all denominations and persuasions.

In the 1970s, the Board of Trustees and staff felt the neighborhood in Northeast Washington, D.C, where the National Lutheran Home was located, was becoming less safe. They started investigating moving options, and we moved in 1980. Not all the residents, their families, or team members wanted the move. It was a big adjustment. For example, the Rockville location didn't have the same bus service that was available in the city.

Once in Rockville, there was better physical security for residents. The air conditioning was a huge benefit! Initially, the trend after the move was to serve people who were more infirmed (*I averaged 45 funerals a year*), but that changed once the independent living cottages were opened. In Rockville, I feel we began serving more residents who were older and had greater financial need.

My family moved from Silver Spring to Gaithersburg when we bought a home and my wife, Marilyn, began teaching there. My children and wife volunteered. Marilyn made special decorative birthday cakes for the residents. Nan Rehnquist (*Auxiliary volunteer coordinator and wife of former Chief Justice Rehnquist*) pushed a program of pet visitors. Marilyn was one of the first people who did the training and testing for this program. She recalls an experience with a resident who hadn't talked in two years. After watching our dog do tricks, the resident said in a clear voice, "Oh, isn't that cute!"

My confirmation verse, Matthew 7:7, has had an impact on me: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." I thank the Lutheran Home and the Lord for my call there. It was a ministry I really loved, and it was probably more meaningful and real than having a church congregation. These were some of the great years of my ministry... and full of God's grace and mercy.



Faith Bauersfeld

When I think of the move from Washington, D.C. to Rockville, one word comes to mind: buses! Lots and lots of buses were needed for moving day. They formed a parade in the driveway with military precision, as they were on loan from Andrews Air Force Base.

Moving 300 (*many non-ambulatory*) residents on August 19, 1980 was a major operation, but they didn't seem anxious. They had been involved in all the major decisions relating to the building. Testing the most comfortable chairs for the dining rooms became an event. Small groups visited their individual rooms before moving day. They were excited to finally arrive and see everything bright and shiny.

Once residents were settled into the new building, family, friends, and church members wanted to visit. This brought a second wave of buses from all parts of the Shenandoah Valley, Baltimore, West Virginia and even Pennsylvania. To guide the crowds, the Auxiliary formed the Docent Corps.

Armed with comparisons with the original location, docents led small groups through the halls seven days a week. Each guide had a route mapped out through the building to cut down on congestion and not overwhelm normal activities. From the chapel, the comfortable living rooms on each neighborhood, and all the way downstairs to the spacious activities center (*now the myPotential Rehabilitation gym*), visitors viewed the state-of-the-art building. Most tours ended with lunch in the new cafeteria.

Fall Festival and Founder's Day in the spring brought more busloads of visitors and families to see relatives and church members. The gift shop was not yet established, so the festivals were opportunities to shop. Docents directed traffic inside the building and operated the elevators to avoid overloading.

Over time, residents became familiar with the building and took pride in their new home. As the demand for tours diminished and the number of visitors became more manageable, residents themselves became the guides, sharing a look at life in the building.

Docents found other ways to serve, from helping in the clinic, serving birthday dinners or joining the sewing group that repaired residents' clothing. You might be surprised to discover some are still active on the campus now. The name and the building may have changed, but the sense of community is still the same forty years later.



Mary Lasher Hartzell

I began volunteering at the old National Lutheran Home in Washington, D.C. when I was a teenager in the 1940s. A friend of mine had invited me to visit St. Luke Lutheran Church in Silver Spring, which is how I met Ray Hartzell and his family. They volunteered at the National Lutheran Home, and I started volunteering with them. Ray and I were married when I was 18 in 1950.

When he was in seminary, we lived in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. We returned to the D.C. area, and I found many ways to volunteer with ministries where Ray was serving (*Trinity Lutheran Church Bethesda, Lutheran Social Services*) – as well as the National Lutheran Home, both in D.C. and when it moved to Rockville.

From 1986 to 2009, we lived in California. We returned to move into one of the independent living cottages, and I started volunteering again. I would recommend for other people to live here. The team is wonderful and caring. I like the music events here, such as Dale Jarrett, or other times when I get to hear and sing along with favorite voices such as Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby.

My husband, Ray, passed away in October 2017 and I miss him every day. My faith keeps me going. Volunteering here, reading books, and phone calls with my four sons keeps my spirit up. My sense of service comes from love of God and love of each other. John 3:16 still rings true for me today.

WHAT HAS MOTIVATED YOUR GIVING?

The consideration and professionalism shown to my family—the love and friendship. My loved ones were treated with love and respect throughout their time in the community and were never alone when it came time for them to pass on. It was a wonderful comfort to the family that couldn't be there at that moment in time. ~ Marlene Patton



The Rev. Jan P. Lookingbill

From 1974-1979 I was the young Pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in East Baltimore, an old congregation in a section of Baltimore known as Highlandtown. As the pastor I was privileged to transport one of the older widows of the congregation to the National Lutheran Home.

She had been living alone since her husband died, and her children were unable to continue supporting her in the house. The house where she raised her family was then valued at about \$60,000, her only asset. She arrived at the National Lutheran Home to find her room well appointed, the nurses very supportive, meals served by a friendly team. In short, it was the best she had ever lived, and she said so aloud!

That's when I knew I would be very supportive of the ministry of the National Lutheran Home in any way requested. When I moved to Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Bethesda, The Rev. Dr. Richard Reichard, Executive Director at the time, asked if I would be willing to serve on the Board of Trustees.

That was 1981 and I continued to serve on the Board as a member, then elected to serve as Treasurer and also as the Bishop's Designee until 2007. Working with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees over those years, I have held our responsibility as a sacred trust to enhance the lives of those in need of a safe and supportive community.



Richard A. Dawson

My visits to the National Lutheran Home began in the late 1960s and continued through the mid 1990s.



I was in the Army and stationed several times at the Pentagon. This permitted fairly regular visitations – some for lunches and most in the evenings and weekends – with two aunts who were, at times, residents. Those two special ladies were Bertie and Sarah Dawson. Sarah was a resident in the original National Lutheran Home on Douglas St. in D.C. and Bertie was a volunteer. After the relocation to Rockville, Bertie moved into independent living and subsequently moved into continuous care in the Health Center until her passing.

I was so impressed and pleased with the round-the-clock care provided to the residents by Dr. Richard Reichard, his most caring wife, Melba, and their entire administrative and medical team.

One fond memory is how a group of resident ladies “drafted” me to sit at their dining table during visits while the community was still in D.C. It was such a pleasant setting and happy time to spend whatever lunch times I could with them on many occasions over several years. They were excited on one particular occasion when I “commissioned” each of them as an honorary Second Lieutenant, complete with her own little gold bar of rank. They subsequently wore them whenever I visited with them.

My wife, Isi, and I continued visits until both aunts had passed away in the late 1990s. We’re still so pleased to know that the love and premier care we so appreciated and valued are still the realities of The Village at Rockville.

WHAT HAS MOTIVATED YOUR GIVING?

I like the feeling you are valued as a person, not a volunteer, donor, etc. We are always greeted with a smile. The front desk is always welcoming to everyone. I give to help in some small way those who are in need. I know someday I might need help, also. ~ Donna Breslyn



Ellen Herd

I first got involved in the early 1970s through the monthly sing-alongs with the memory care residents at the original location. They loved singing the old hymns, such as “Old Rugged Cross.” I was glad when it moved to Rockville, only five miles from my house.

When a member of my congregation (Emmanuel in Bethesda) became Auxiliary president, I started getting more active: helping at the bazaars, being in charge of bake sales, and before I knew it I was involved in various Board roles, finally serving two terms as President.

Once in Rockville, all the residents loved having their own rooms. I was part of the “Pal” program and I visited at least once a week, often more when I was an Auxiliary officer. I also helped with bingo, noon prayers, and at the bazaars. What I enjoyed the most was brightening up the lives of residents. I felt I got as much out of it as I offered to them. I always felt so good and inspired after I left there.

In 2000, I moved to Delaware and therefore stopped being involved. For the almost 30 years I spent volunteering, I always found the staff very, very helpful. They truly care about the residents.

FUN FACTS

- ▶ The Rockville property was purchased in 1974, groundbreaking in 1978, and the move August 19, 1980.
- ▶ The Auxiliary gave \$100,000 towards building the Rockville Chapel in memory of its long-time President, Miss A. Barbara Wiegand.
- ▶ St. Mark’s Lutheran Church of Springfield, Virginia gave a Christ-figure carving for the Chapel in honor of their then pastor, The Rev. Duane Carlson, ten-year Board President
- ▶ Groundbreaking for independent living cottages was in 1981, with the final ones done by 2008.
- ▶ Over the years, the Auxiliary has given more buses and vans than we can count!



Jeanne Buster

On Saturdays in the late 1970s, I began visiting a member of my congregation (*Grace Lutheran, Washington, D.C.*) who lived at the National Lutheran Home. Nan Rehnquist, who was in charge of Auxiliary events and volunteers, asked me to join the Auxiliary after moving to Rockville. When I retired full-time, I also joined the Auxiliary Board, served on various committees, and became Chair. Later I was elected as a member of The Village's Board of Trustees, and served as Chair.

I was always involved in the church, at the local, synod and national levels in such roles as teacher, board or committee member, or parliamentarian. My involvement grew out of a deep belief, expressed by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, of what is Christian community. His simple message was: it is important to live out faith in service to others. I, too, believe that the first service one owes others consists of listening to them.

My volunteer work with residents over these years has included helping at the birthday parties, the Fall Festival, lunches and dinners, as well as other Auxiliary activities. What has been most meaningful to me throughout my work at The Village at Rockville has been as a caring presence for any resident who did not have family or regular visitors. When visiting with residents I feel in a sense that I am able to channel some of the love of God to each of them.

One of my favorite Bible verses is Proverbs 6:23, "For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life."

FUN FACTS

- ▶ **1980** The average desk had an IBM Correcting Selectric typewriter.
- ▶ **2020** The average desk has a Laptop (*HP, MacBook, Dell, etc.*)
- ▶ **1980** Life Expectancy was 69 years (*Washington, DC*)
- ▶ **2020** Life Expectancy is 84 years (*Rockville, MD*)



Connie Phillips

I worked at the National Lutheran Home/The Village at Rockville for 38 years from 1981 to 2019. My roles included Clinical Dietitian (*tasked with the challenge of complying with Maryland State and Federal Charting Regulations for 300 residents*), Assistant Director and Director of the Department of Food Service.

The faith-based community is the heart of our mission. “Will it enhance the life of residents?” was the primary driver for our bottom line. This philosophy engages like-minded individuals who embody this passion. I was proud to work with the management team, Auxiliary, volunteers, and hard-working team members in every department who dedicated their lives to the residents. I treasure the gift of friendship with every caring person I have had the privilege to know.

Pastor Richard Reichard, Executive Director for a majority of time when I was on staff, gifted us with the strength of leadership and spirit of devotion which provided the foundation for our guiding principles. Pastor and his wife, Melba, inspired loyalty through their kind mentorship and commitment to faith.

I offer my gratitude to every resident and their families. I was honored by your trust and loved the chance to develop lifetime relationships. You gave us the golden opportunity to care for you and be by your side throughout your lives.

My cherished memories will always be with The Village at Rockville. My congratulations on this anniversary and all the commemorations to come!

WHAT HAS MOTIVATED YOUR GIVING?

The cleanliness of The Village at Rockville and the loving care given the residents. ~ Allen and Shannon Hobbs



Chaplain Judith Simonson

Here are some random memories from my time as Chaplain, 1984 to 1996.

1. I had two wonderful organists, Lois Bamberger and Margaret Young, who supported my work in many ways over the years. Since we had Sunday worship, two morning prayer services, and at least one funeral a week, they worked a lot harder than any congregational organist!
2. One day Barbara Bush came to speak to the women's organization in the chapel. The Secret Service had to inspect my office so she could hang her coat in the closet. In the end she left it in the car.
3. The Sunday after I began my work, the Auxiliary had a service to dedicate two windows they had given. I am standing in the door to my office and a man comes up to me, extends his hand, and says, "Hello, I'm Bill Rehnquist." His wife was the president of the Auxiliary and worked to support it even after she was suffering from the cancer that ultimately took her life.
4. Then there was the day a first floor resident rolled up to me and said "You know why we like your sermons?" I bit, of course, and she answered, "Because they're short."
5. Before coming to the National Lutheran Home, I had temporarily been a high school math teacher at Stone Ridge Country Day School of the Sacred Heart. When a hapless priest came in to say mass, the sisters introduced me and said, "she will be assisting you today, Father". A while after I came to National Lutheran Home, a Catholic resident died. I called his priest to ask him to say mass in the chapel. As we talked, I realized this man was the same priest. So Father Mike and I did it once more! As we stood waiting to bring the casket down the aisle, he said to me, "You say a prayer and I'll say a prayer." Something told me to look at what he was going to say. His book had the same two prayers as the Lutheran Book of Worship. Therefore, I pointed and said, "You do this one and I'll do that one."

WHAT HAS MOTIVATED YOUR GIVING?

Because you have taken such care of my mother, Wilda G. Simpson, for 18 years. ~ Frances Mallon

Stephanie Penrod Becquet



Wedding at TVAR Chapel

In October 1986, I started work at the National Lutheran Home as a Certified Medicine Aid on the 1-Virginia neighborhood. The residents there mainly needed just a little assistance. This job brought me life experiences and relationships I would not trade for anything. When I was first hired, I knew it was where I was supposed to be; it felt right. Everything just fell right into place, and I made lifelong friendships.

Back then all the residents were Lutheran, as well as many staff. I really liked the obvious spiritual dimension. There were a lot of Lutheran pastors at the time. Since I didn't have grandparents involved with my life, I was honored to have a number of residents who filled that gap for me. I got to know them personally, and our lives intertwined with one another. I knew residents and their families cared about all the staff. "Love your neighbor" was lived out in our relationships.

As a part of the staff, I felt valued, respected, and appreciated. Our relationships with each other truly felt like family. We had great longevity, and career paths were encouraged. I used the free education funds available to staff to further my education, and got an associate's degree in health management in 2006. I then started working in the medical records department until I retired in 2017.

One example I recall of the caring support that staff received was of Norma Spinella, the former Director of Nursing. She would stand by the time clock on Friday evenings and thank us for our work, wishing us a good weekend.

I'm thankful for my decades of service at the National Lutheran Home/The Village at Rockville. It has helped shape my personal growth and understanding of what is important in life.

DID YOU KNOW THE VILLAGE AT ROCKVILLE OFFERS THESE SERVICES?

- ▶ **Guests come from hospitals to recover and receive rehabilitation services.**
- ▶ **Assisted living apartments, including a memory care neighborhood.**
- ▶ **myPotential Clinic, myPotential Rehabilitation, and myPotential at Home services are available to all.**



Chaplain Lois Eriksson

In the summer of 1992, five Gettysburg Seminary students and I had the privilege of doing our Clinical Pastoral Education under the supervision of Judy Simonson at the National Lutheran Home in Rockville.

I was “Chaplain Lois” from January 1996 to 2008, both part time and full time, some with Chaplain Tom White. I continued until Chaplain Bob Day arrived. I loved every part of being a Chaplain. I felt like I was doing the Lord’s work! I loved all the residents. I especially remember visits with Delores Lyon, Janet Deardorff, and Ursula Heine. Anita Hohenberger was the “Chaplain’s Helper.”

A favorite aspect of my time at the National Lutheran Home was leading a Saturday morning Hymn Sing in Lang Hall. By the last couple years, as many as 50 residents participated in each session. We sang 20 hymns at each session (*not always all the verses*). At first, we would begin with a Bible Study, but it was hard for some participants to avoid nodding off. I placed the Bible Study in the middle of the Hymn Sing. It worked! No more nodding off.

When Shirley Allender had the responsibility for resident care, I leaned on her. When she became an independent living resident, she would help with Altar duties. Dr. and Mrs. (*Melba*) Reichard were both very supportive of my ministry. My favorite Bible Verse is Philippians 4:4: “Rejoice in the Lord, always!” I rejoice when I recall my time as the Chaplain.

FUN FACTS

- ▶ When National Lutheran Home started, we only served Lutherans.
- ▶ Before we moved to Rockville in 1980, many members from the Mother House of Little Sisters of the Poor, which was closing, moved into the original location and then with us to Rockville.
- ▶ The Village at Rockville serves people from all different denominations and faiths.



Chaplain Thomas White

As a boy of eight, I remember the junior choir at St. Peter's Lutheran (*now Redeemer*) in Washington singing carols for the residents at the old National Lutheran Home in D.C. each Christmas, and attending the wonderful turkey dinners and bazaars in the fall with my parents.

As a pastor, members of my church (*Epiphany Lutheran in Burtonsville, Maryland*) and I played monthly bingo with the residents in the upstairs solarium. It was so hot I could have worn shorts even in January! We continued bingo after the move to Rockville. When a Lutheran church in Baltimore closed, its members, who were residents of National Lutheran Home, asked if they could join Epiphany. I went from having no homebound members to having seven. I would visit and serve the Holy Eucharist to these new members each month. In addition, my congregation was responsible for the plant booth at the fall and spring festivals.

I was invited to join the Admissions Evaluation Committee and then National Lutheran Home's Board, eventually becoming chair of the Nominations Committee. When I applied to be Chaplain in 1996, I recall praying, "Lord, not my will but your will be done." This call was the best and happiest eleven-plus years of my entire now 50 years of fulfilling ministry. I've been a donor, volunteer, supporting pastor, and Chaplain.

My most important memory in leaving every day was praying to God that I had given to the residents even a fraction of the ministry they had given to me – love, faith, and encouragement! I was inspired as I witnessed residents living their last years with deep and strong faith, and dying with that same faith.

I have many examples of the generous love of residents. During one pastoral care visit (*my number one priority*), the resident and I chatted about her family, discussed a faith question, and then prayed. Before I left, she said, "Wait, Chaplain Tom, I have something for you." She opened her bureau drawer and handed me a small gift, wrapped in Kleenex and tied with a ribbon. Inside there was a bar of hotel soap, Cashmere Bouquet, on which she had inscribed a cross. I still have and cherish that unbelievably generous gift of love!

I still call The Village at Rockville "the treasure house of faith." I ministered joyfully as Chaplain during my years there, knowing we were serving even people who did not have the means to cover the cost of their care. This mission was at the core of our ministry, and has been my motivation in being a donor.



Hedwig Dishart

Our mother, Hedwig Dishart, was amazing. In 2000, at 85 years of age, she made the decision to move to The Village at Rockville after being introduced to it by her pastor, Rev. James Utt. That was one of the very best decisions she ever made. In fact she often said she thought she was having a dream and would wake up and find none of it was real.

Her years there were filled with loving care, spiritual encouragement, interaction with many friends and multiple activities that were stimulating and fulfilling.

Mother passed away at 103 years of age, and we are grateful that her final years were such a joy to her. ~ **Marilyn Apfel & Janet Campbell**



Maria Zelenka

My grandmother, Marie Zelenka, came to the National Lutheran Home at the age of 98. Her vision was extremely poor. I always came to visit at lunchtime and my grandmother always urged me to “order anything on the menu—my treat.” Yes, she thought we were at a good restaurant. We usually spoke Czech—and she always made a point of saying how good the food was. As we sat near all the nurses, they knew to give me a paper plate and a fork to share my grandmother’s lunch. ~ **Katherine Cartwright**



Juan Granados

I started working at The Village at Rockville as a maintenance man in March 2001. I had previous experience in a California senior living community and I enjoy helping others. That is what I love the most about my job. There are too many examples of the kindness of the residents for me to count.

My father is 92 and I can't give him this help because he is too far away. My work here is my way of giving back. I see the residents as my family, and would want someone to do the same for me. I do this job because I care so much for others, especially the residents here.



Ruth Wertman

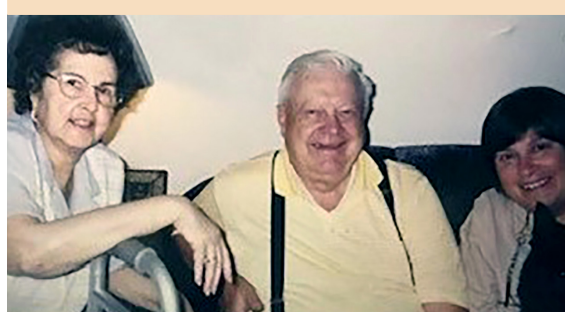
As a library volunteer, I particularly enjoyed greeting patrons who definitely wanted reading material but had no idea what author or topic. After a few friendly questions and observations, the client left clutching a book with an eagerness to settle down with a read.



Bill Wertman

When visiting as part of the Senior Beacon program (*I was known as the Tuesday mailman*) I was thrilled when some residents looked forward to my weekly visits, whether or not they actually received any mail. For some residents this was the only visit they had during the week.

Deborah Mastermak Franklin



with Josephine and Richard Mastermak

In about 2005, I moved my parents to some senior apartments in the D.C. area. It became clear they needed more care, especially my mother who had serious memory issues. After visiting a number of senior communities, they chose The Village at Rockville for their residence.

They moved in together in about 2007. My mother died four months later. To spend time with my dad, I began volunteering when he played beach ball volleyball with other residents. Other volunteers, staff and I would have fun singing, dancing, and just acting silly. Before you know it, I was invited to be on the Auxiliary Board. Many other family members got recruited that way.

I enjoy spending time with the residents – chatting with them and meeting their families. I've also helped with Sewing Camp, the Mardi Gras party, and the monthly birthday parties. My dad was very proud of me being in the Auxiliary and helping out.

Dad died in his sleep in 2015. We had his memorial service in the Chapel since the other residents wanted a chance to say goodbye to him.

I've continued to be active with the Auxiliary, serving as the VP while Betty Henriksen was the President, and now as the President since 2019. I encourage other people to volunteer and brighten the day of the residents. You will get to know the residents as if they are family. They will brighten your day as well.

WHAT HAS MOTIVATED YOUR GIVING?

From the time I was a child I benefited from others who gave of their time and donations. So I am happy to be in the position to be of help. ~ Ros Hopkins

God has provided me with love and compassion to meet my needs, so I want to praise Him by giving to those in need. ~ Joanne Bowers



Alice Benson

In 2005 I started working with Lutheran Planned Giving through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Foundation. The then called National Lutheran Home was one of the organizations I served. I began meeting many of the wonderful residents, team members, and board members and helping them consider leaving planned gifts to ministries they loved.

Shortly afterwards, my mother-in-law moved into a cottage. She loved the community, and her only regret was not moving in sooner. Our entire family was grateful for the caring people who helped her through her final days.

In my role as Philanthropy Director since 2017, I have been blessed to hear stories of perseverance, grace, forgiveness, and growth. I have seen amazing generosity as people give to help others and show love for their “neighbors” – whether residents, family members, staff, volunteers, or people who have no known connection other than they care. The guiding principle seems to be acting on love and kindness. The world needs more of this. This gives me great hope for our future.

FUN FACTS

- ▶ **Zelda and John Boccina set up a fund through their estate that still provides transportation for independent living residents’ trips.**
- ▶ **In 2016, the first floor Memory Care neighborhood received a lovely outside garden, thanks to the generosity of donors.**
- ▶ **In 2018, donors’ gifts purchased a magnificent pipe organ and additional stained glass windows for our Chapel.**
- ▶ **The Benevolent Care Endowment supports residents who have outlived their resources through no fault of their own. It mainly grows by planned or estate gifts.**



Jason Gottschalk

I began volunteering at The Village at Rockville in 2010 as the musical director of the Village Choir and Handbells. This role blossomed into a part-time position as Music and Arts Specialist, which included music lectures, establishing a concert series, and developing partnerships with area Lutheran churches.

Some favorite memories are the performances at the Auxiliary's annual Fall Festival. In 2012, I became the first Life Enrichment (*now ConnectedLiving*) Director. In 2014, Larry Bradshaw asked me to be Executive Director, which required spending almost a year in training. I was initially hesitant. As soon as I took on the role full-time, I began to love working with so many devoted team members, and the marvelously loving, challenging, thoughtful, and vivacious residents.

These people quickly became like a second family to me. I cherish the memories of monthly socials, where many tried to "fatten me up" (*successfully*), performing Christmas Madrigal Dinners to a packed house in Lang Hall, having lunch with residents and their families at the Auxiliary birthday parties, playing the organ for church services, and developing close relationships with so many extraordinary individuals.

In 2018, after eight years at The Village at Rockville, National Lutheran Communities & Services (NLCS) Chief Information Officer and I began a new venture for NLCS called Petalo, which develops technology to assist retirement communities and their residents. I miss the daily interaction with staff and residents, many of whom I would call friends. I know the Lord has amazing things in store for The Village at Rockville over the next 40 years and beyond.

WHAT HAS MOTIVATED YOUR GIVING?

The caring attitude in the attention given by staff toward residents as staff provides peace, comfort and security to and for us as residents. Do not change the positive and countless attention and services which work so well in providing a comfortable home and community environment. ~ Tom and Carolyn Hickman



Eva Jun

One day in 2005, as we drove by the then called National Lutheran Home, my friend pointed to the buildings and said, “This is the best kept secret in Rockville - it is a wonderful place for senior living.” After making a visit, even though we didn’t feel we were quite ready, my husband and I and his sister, Lihui, put our names on the waiting list.

Soon we learned a new cluster would be built on Wescott Place. Lihui submitted her application days before we did; she was able to get one of the beautiful cottages on Wescott Place. My husband and I did not make the cut-off.

As years roll by, we keep hearing from Lihui how much she enjoys living at The Village at Rockville. We felt readier than ever to join her. When the Glenmere project opened for entrance application, Jay and I were the first to sign up. Downsized in 2019, sold our home in 2020, we eagerly await for our move in 2021. Now, I’m even serving on the Board of Trustees.





Chaplain Alexis King

I love the people at the Village and miss you dearly! It has been four years since the military called us away. I served briefly from Nov 2015 to Jun 2016 and am grateful God blessed me with that opportunity to serve, love, and carry you in my heart and prayers wherever the Lord calls our family through our military service and following. Our time together was a light in the darkness for me and I cherish you and love you all! Remember whose you are in Christ and whom you are freed to love and serve in Word and deed, having been justified by grace through faith in our crucified and risen Lord and Savior! Peace be with you!



Marcia & Dick Mattocks

We were on the waiting list for 14 years before moving into a cottage on the west side of the campus. As long-term residents of Rockville, we knew of the fine reputation of The Village at Rockville: the stable management, the quality care, the competitive pricing, and the ecumenical Christian atmosphere. Our children thought we were too young until we reached our eighties. They were seeing signs of aging of which we were unaware. We became residents in December 2015. The sales process was very professional as was the construction phase and move-in, and we were immediately comfortable as residents.

It was after our move that the quality of the organization and the resultant lifestyle became evident. We witnessed the development of Glenmere that interfered with the life of several of our neighbors who had to move to other cottages. The thoughtful care that each resident received during their move was extraordinary, and solidified in our minds that the management is to be trusted.

It is clear to us that the quality of care for residents will continue to be exceptional in spite of lockdowns and illness, and that the lifestyle of healthy living will remain intact for The Village at Rockville family. We are truly thankful that we are part of that family.



Melissa Blackstone

I started work at The Village at Rockville in 2015 as the Volunteer Coordinator and then transitioned to the role of the ConnectedLiving Manager. I got into this type of work because I really enjoy working with people. It is so rewarding to me to know that small things make a big difference in others' lives. With my degree in business management, one of my professors gave me advice as I was graduating and told me to go into the construction industry or health care. My journey here was one of faith because I was comfortable where I was. I felt I needed to step out in faith and follow God's plan.

Providing residents with new experiences and seeing my team professionally grow inspires me to come to work. I love to see people do things they say they cannot do; what a joy it is. I count it amazing to be a part of such a diverse leadership team. When we put our minds together, we really do make some amazing things happen.

The residents have touched me in different ways. They are kind, loving and always willing to "teach" me something. They have taught me about the importance of love and marriage, clear communication, proofreading, humility, and our history as a community. I am thankful they believe in me and trust me to lead them in enriching experiences. From their words of wisdom to their generous feedback, it is all meaningful and helps my world go around.

This community has so much to offer from developmental opportunities to really engage with people from all walks of life. This is a place where you can be yourself, a place that embraces differences and diversity, where our values are depicted through our actions. I feel blessed to be a part of a community that leads by faith and example. A place where service and kindness reign. I walk confidently every day knowing I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

WHAT HAS MOTIVATED YOUR GIVING?

Persons whom I have had the pleasure of knowing here at The Village at Rockville. It is God's will to help those who need it. ~ Dawn Doscher



Chaplain Charlene Barnes

It is an honor to be working at The Village at Rockville as we celebrate forty years of making a difference in the lives of our residents and community in Rockville. Many chaplains have served here before me, and they paved the way for how a chaplain spiritually cares for the residents and staff in this place.

When I started here on June 15, 2020, I was amazed to see The Village at Rockville doesn't just offer services to the residents but the whole community. When we moved here forty years ago, the aim was to care for those in need and be a thriving community in which everyone can experience successful, holistic living. And because of the dedication of the staff, we are still fulfilling that calling by God today.

Being called as a Chaplain to serve the people at The Village at Rockville, I look forward to visiting the residents and hearing their stories, joys, and sorrows each day. I am motivated to be a reminder of God's presence and to make sure that everyone knows that they matter.

We have traveled not by ourselves in this journey but with God by our side, who is leading and guiding us. In Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." May we continue to do so in our next forty years here at The Village at Rockville.

WHAT HAS MOTIVATED YOUR GIVING?

Living here has been a wonderful experience—there are too many wonderful, kind, helpful neighbors and staff to even begin to sort them out. It is a wonderful home. ~ **Patt Stephenson**



Kyle Hreben

I joined The Village at Rockville in 2018 as Executive Director. From the moment I stepped foot on campus, I felt the love, compassion and sincerity of our community that makes it truly unique. The character of this place is defined by this spirit, cultivated now for over 130 years. It's truly an honor to lead such an amazing community.

It has been an extraordinary time of uncertainty for many of us as we have battled the coronavirus pandemic. I have been amazed by the outpouring of support for the community and the dedication and sacrifices of our team members and residents. I can't thank resident family and community members enough for their wonderful support.

We want to serve all residents and their families faithfully and well into the future. In our efforts to continually innovate and build on our storied foundation, we look toward the best ways to meet the needs of residents and community. Our new Glenmere addition -- including independent living apartments with an aquatic pool, additional dining venues, and other common areas -- represents a huge leap forward in both housing options and amenities for our community.

With the spirit of growth and the resiliency I've seen in residents, team members, and volunteers, I know we will continue to thrive for the next 40 years and generations to come. I thank you for your many contributions to this important ministry.

We hope you have been blessed by reading these reflections.

If you would like to be involved in some way to bless others at The Village at Rockville, here are some suggestions:

- ▶ Share your story of a life that has been touched through The Village at Rockville.
- ▶ Volunteer. You can be a blessing to an older adult.
- ▶ Congregational involvement. There are many options, just ask.
- ▶ Make a gift to provide peace of mind for residents, who know they will never be asked to leave if they run out of funds through no fault of their own.
- ▶ Become part of our Sarah Utermehle Legacy Society by including a bequest, beneficiary designation, or some other gift in your final planning (*check with your own advisor, of course*). Please let us know so we might list you, which will encourage others to do the same.
- ▶ When you no longer wish to keep this booklet, please recycle or pass it along to someone else so it might encourage another, or return it to me and I will do that! Thank you!

Alice

Alice Benson, Philanthropy Director

301-354-8422 | abenson@thevillageatrockville.org

PS: I've enclosed an involvement device in case you'd like to act on any of these ideas above. Thanks!



2018 Chapel Blessing



Sarah Utermehle

L E G A C Y S O C I E T Y

**HOW YOU CAN BE
REMEMBERED AND MAKE
A DIFFERENCE LONG
AFTER YOU ARE GONE.**

Thanks to these people who have included a gift in their estate planning:

Richard Ahlberg*
Katherine Amoss
Alice Anderson
Anonymous
Kathryn Baerwald
Dee Dee Barbour
Helen Barrow
Faith and Carl Bauersfeld, Jr.
Joanne Bear
Alice Benson and Kirk Fitch
Nancy Birner
Doug and Helene Bly
John* and Zelda* Boccina
N. Addeene Bost
D. Joanne Bowers
Larry and Billie Bradshaw
Michael and Stacey Brady
Robert Buckwalter
Jeanne Rethwill Buster
Sally Cornell
Ishilde and Richard Dawson
Evelyn* and Robert* Dise
Fern Edwards
Alberta a'Becket Ellis

John and Lois Eriksson
Betty and Leroy* Fredericks
Jason Gottschalk
Eva Heller*
Elizabeth Henriksen*
Frank* and Roselyn Hopkins
Kyle Hreben
H. Norman Krause*
Jeane and John* Leithauser
C. Lynn Mathieu and Ronald Thomas
Nancy Meyer
Iva* and Robert* Parrott
Marlene Herman Forsythe Patton
Frederick* and Harriet* Rabel
Ruth Ragan
Melba and Richard Reichard
Gladys Roman
L. Burns* and Marjorie Saltzgiver
Patricia Stephenson
Nancy Stewart
Asta Teemant
Helen Anne Vigness
Ruth and William Wertman III

**Indicates deceased. Please tell us of any omissions.*

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PART IN
THE VILLAGE AT ROCKVILLE'S HISTORY**

We encourage you to use this page and write down some of your own story.
We welcome you to share it with us as you wish.

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WWW.THEVILLAGEATROCKVILLE.ORG/REFLECTIONS

9701 VEIRS DRIVE, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

301-354-8422

TAX ID: 53-0196624

The Village at Rockville is sponsored by National Lutheran Communities & Services, a faith-based, not-for-profit ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, serving people of all beliefs.

